

GREEK AND ROMAN HISTORY

by
MORTIMER CHAMBERS
University of Chicago

SERVICE CENTER FOR TEACHERS OF HISTORY
A Service of the American Historical Association

400 A Street, S. E.
Washington 3, D. C.

016.938

344g

Copyright 1958

by

THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 58-12238

The American Historical Association does not adopt official views on any field of history. The Service Center, following the tradition of the Association, does not necessarily agree nor disagree with the views expressed in this book.

GREEK AND ROMAN HISTORY

By Mortimer Chambers

INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

This survey will consider some current studies in the field of ancient European history. The domain of classical history is so broad as to make it impossible to give a comprehensive summary of work done during the past decade or so, and yearly bibliographies are supplied in the invaluable *L'année philologique*, edited for many years by J. Marouzeau and J. Ernst. This report will therefore be restricted to works that seem to the writer to represent contemporary trends in scholarship. Unhappily, many meritorious works are excluded as not belonging to the trend under discussion, and the identification itself of such trends may seem arbitrary and even tendentious. In extenuation, it must be submitted that any other method would instantly outrun the space allotted for the survey and would produce an indigestible bibliographical heap. For obvious reasons I refer mostly to works in English. Archaeology will be treated only as it seems to contribute material for the understanding of the several historical subjects.

GENERAL WORKS

Since the completion of the *Cambridge Ancient History* (Volume XII, 1939), the most important single general work has been the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (1949). This is a sumptuously produced volume of nearly one thousand large pages; it is the first new major classical dictionary in decades and is unlikely to have a fresh competitor for a very long time. It has been said that the editors wished to summarize clearly the current knowledge of antiquity rather than to set forth new problems. This attitude, if it existed, is not a bad one, and in any case the five thousand articles by over 160 scholars maintain a high standard. Readers will own this book for years without ceasing to find it indispensable. The resources of the unique Oxford University Press have made the *Dictionary* available for little more than eight dollars.

Oxford—Blackwell's bookstore this time—has also published two other valuable reference books. *Fifty Years of Classical Scholarship* (1954) is a collection of studies, with many bibliographical notes, of the work done on the classical authors since about 1900. The chapter on the Greek historians (there is no chapter on history itself) is one of the best and has the fullest bibliography of all. The other handbook, which every classicist should own, is the third edition of Nairn's inexpensive *Classical Hand-List* (1953), a sensible bibliography of the classical authors and subjects. Greek and Roman history are generously looked after. The book costs less than two dollars, and one's copy is sure to be worn out before the next edition appears.

A more scholarly introduction to ancient history is H. Bengtson's *Einführung in die Alte Geschichte* (2nd ed., 1953): essays on the subjects of ancient history, with excellent bibliography. History cannot be understood without geography, as is proved by M. Cary's *Geographic Background of Greek and Roman History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949). The best brief history of Greece is that of J. B. Bury (3rd ed.); of Rome, M. Cary (2nd ed.), both published by St Martin's.

EARLY GREEK HISTORY

The most spectacular news in many years has been the decipherment of a formerly unread script, Linear B, as a form of ancient Greek.¹ This is the script used for records of bookkeeping, inventories, rosters, and the like on Crete and in Greece proper before 1200 B.C. The matter is thus: During the excavations at the Cretan city of Knossos, in 1900, Sir Arthur Evans found many small clay tablets written in a syllabic script (that is, each symbol stood for a given syllable, e.g., *pa*—not, as in English, for a letter that may be *part* of a syllable). Evans brought forth a huge volume of inscriptions from Knossos in 1909,² but he had deciphered none of the tablets, and in fact published there only fourteen in Linear B.

¹ The decipherment has been challenged by A. J. Beattie of Edinburgh, *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, LXXVI (1956), 1–17, but for replies see J. Chadwick, *ibid.*, LXXVII (1957), 202–04, and L. R. Palmer, *Gnomon*, XXIX (1957), 561–81.

² *Scripta Minoa*, I (Oxford: Clarendon Press); II appeared in 1952, III is forthcoming.

The work of scholars divided the tablets from Crete into two classes, called Linear A and Linear B. Most of the tablets ultimately found have been Linear B: Evans himself found more than three thousand of these, but of Linear A only a few hundred are known even today. It was further observed that the Linear B tablets came only from Knossos, the leading city of Crete. This fact seemed to correspond to the development, during the 1400's B.C., of a style of pottery at Knossos that is found nowhere else in Crete (it is called "Late Minoan II" by the archaeologists). But so long as such tablets were known only from Crete, it could be assumed that Linear A and B were merely different forms of Cretan scripts, differing from each other as the pottery of Crete in general differed from that of Knossos during Late Minoan II.

The discovery that forced re-examination of this hypothesis was the finding of about six hundred Linear B tablets, by C. W. Blegen, in 1939—on the Greek mainland, at Pylos. It was immediately puzzling why Cretan writing should be found in Greece. A further puzzle lay in the fact that Blegen could date this hoard of tablets to around 1200 B.C.; yet in Crete, the writing of both Linear A and B stopped, forever as it seems, with the destruction of Knossos and some eleven other towns around 1410/05 B.C. We thus had the difficulty of explaining why the Cretan bookkeeping script was still written in Greece some two hundred years after the script vanished on Crete. Assumptions could be made about the transmission of writing from one culture to another, but failing any decipherment conjecture was sterile. The discovery of Linear B tablets elsewhere in Greece (they are now known from Mycenae, Thebes, and elsewhere) only sharpened the puzzle.

Meanwhile American scholars (notably the late Alice Kober and Blegen's pupil Emmett Bennett, who published the Pylos tablets³) were working on the script along with scholars overseas. Among those interested was a young London architect, Michael Ventris, who had years before (inspired by a lecture of Evans) taken up Minoan writing as a hobby. In 1951 Ventris began to issue privately circulated reports of his progress; and as late as 1952 he seems to have tried to find evidence of Etruscan (not yet understood) in Lin-

³ *The Pylos Tablets: A Preliminary Transcription* (Princeton: University Press, 1951); rev. ed. 1955.

ear B. But in 1952 he began to explore the possibilities that Linear B might be Greek. Within a few months he had written, with John Chadwick of Cambridge, the crucial article⁴ proving that Linear B was Greek (Linear A has not been read as Greek: Professor Gordon of Brandeis has recently suggested that it is Akkadian). Confirmation was found when one of the tablets from Pylos, unseen by Ventris and Chadwick, was read by Blegen according to the new scheme. The major work of Ventris and Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek* (Cambridge, University Press), came out in 1956. This is a remarkable publication, with discussion, of three hundred selected texts in Linear B. (A representative text: "For the king: 1200 l. of seed for condiment.") Later in 1956, at age 42, Ventris was killed in a motoring accident. It is said that his achievements as an architect would have outstripped his decipherment of Linear B. That may be so; but buildings wear away, and in the history of Greek scholarship this inspired amateur will forever occupy a unique place.⁵

Some years or decades will pass before all the Linear B tablets can be read with certainty. Meanwhile *Documents* is the fullest statement of the progress so far made. I pass to the historical value of the decipherment. For the historian of Greek civilization this key to the early literacy of the Aegean is priceless. After Linear B, literacy did not return to the Greeks until they adapted to their language the alphabet of the Semitic Phoenicians, after 800 B.C. Our present evidence fails to show any writing of Greek between 1200 and 800. Wace has suggested that this gap in writing might disappear if more sites from the period were excavated,⁶ and it is true that more excavation is needed on sites that might disclose writing. It may be dangerous to press the argument from silence; on the other hand, the lack of evidence may not be deceptive. It does seem that the Greeks lost the art of writing as a result of the invasion of Greece by the speakers of the Doric dialect, between 1200–1100. If so, the Dorian invasion was a violent cause for the utter cessation of writing—whether the more learned class was killed off, or commerce so stunted that records became pointless.

⁴ *Journ. Hellen. Stud.*, LXXIII (1953), 84–103.

⁵ Palmer (cited, note 1 *supra*) has reviewed *Documents* at length and contributed a moving obituary of Ventris, pp. 636–37 of the same journal.

⁶ *Classical Weekly*, XLVII (1953/4), 154.

The current reading of Linear B also tempts us to conjecture about relations between the Mycenaean Greeks and the Cretans. Sir Arthur Evans had thought that the Mycenaean culture was derived from the Cretan and that the Cretans controlled the cities of Peloponnese that show Cretan influence. We now see, however, that Greeks or Greek-speakers were living in the palace of Knossos, writing Greek on the tablets. These Greeks could have been commercial secretaries brought over from the mainland to Crete. Some of this class could have bequeathed Linear B to the mainland, where it is found two hundred years after its disappearance on the island. Probably this theory cannot be disproved.

But the opposite theory is not out of the question and has been commending itself to scholars. The presence of the Greeks in Knossos may have been due to strong political influence, perhaps even military domination in the city. The Greeks may have arrived in force at Knossos, settled down to control the wealthy city, and caused Linear B to be created for their service. If it was the Greeks who massacred the several Cretan cities about 1410/05—and it is hard to see who else could have done it—they sailed away from Crete bearing Linear B with them. The script survived on the mainland until it was blotted out by the convulsions of the twelfth century. Professor George Mylonas has written, "There can be no question of Minoan conquest of the mainland. It is proved that the creators of the Mycenaean culture and power were Greeks. Now we begin to talk of a Mycenaean conquest of Knossos about 1450 B.C.!"⁷

Another problem of the Mycenaean Age is the war with Troy told in Homer's *Iliad*. The Greek legend was that a Panhellenic fleet, led by a Mycenaean king, Agamemnon, sailed to Troy and destroyed the city after a war of ten years. The ten years are an exaggeration; but not even the sceptical Thucydides, who wanted to minimize all Greek achievements before the Peloponnesian War, tried to deny the reality of the Trojan War. The archaeologists believe that one of the several towns built on the site of Troy (Troy VII a) was destroyed by human enemies around 1200 B.C. Greek chronological tradition dated the fall of Troy to 1183; and since the Greeks claimed to have destroyed Troy, it was natural to sup-

⁷ *Archaeology*, IX (1956), 279.

pose that they did in fact attack Troy VII a, which was sacked at about the right time.

The problem has recently been treated in a penetrating study by Professor Oscar Broneer.⁸ He points out that Mycenae is a poor candidate for the leader of a Panhellenic fleet around 1200. Indeed by this time she had clearly passed the zenith of her power, and about 1200 there was considerable damage in Mycenae, presumably caused by the Dorian invaders. "The disasters which engulfed the Peloponnese can be dated by the pottery to about 1200 B.C. . . . Could a loosely connected alliance of such cities, which only a short time before [the war] had been unable to ward off destruction from their heavily fortified citadels, have organized an overseas expedition capable of reducing the kingdom of Priam and its Asiatic allies?" Further doubt on Homer has been cast by Schachermeyr, who suggests that Troy VII a was sacked by warriors of Asia Minor, not by Greeks. Nor can we move the Trojan War back to the last preceding destruction, that of Troy VI, for that city was ruined about 1300 by an earthquake, and therefore not by Greeks. The conclusion of these arguments would be that the Greeks were wrong in thinking that they had ever fought a major war against Troy in which they destroyed a city.

The relevant volume of the impressive series *Troy* has not yet appeared, and the problem has not been solved. Possibly the Greek traditions could be saved after all. We could assume that Mycenae led the forces to Troy in the last extremity of her waning power and that the absence of a guarding force allowed a savage raid on Mycenae by the Dorians about 1200. Stunned, the city did not rebuild on a large scale after 1200, but the final work of subduing Mycenae was not accomplished until about 1100. But however we reconstruct the historical background to the Trojan War, it cannot be held that Mycenae led the expedition when her power was at its height.

GREEK HISTORY IN THE HISTORIC PERIOD

It is customary to divide Greek history into the prehistoric and historic periods, the break coming at 776 B.C., the date of the first Olympic games. This is also near the date of the importation of the Phoenician alphabet and probably near the date of the formation of

⁸ *Antiquity*, XXX (1956), 9-18.

the Homeric poems into something like their present shape. The eighth century was also the age of the first widespread colonization from Greece, especially westward to Sicily and southern Italy. In certain western colonies archaeological evidence, assembled especially by Alan Blakeway,⁹ proves that merchandise was being shipped before the traditional dates for the founding of the colonies. Explorers who founded the earliest western colonies already had some guidance as to possible sites from traders who had been there. The setting up of permanent towns, and immigration in substantial numbers, suggest that need for more land was the main stimulus toward colonization (as Thucydides had said, 1.15), but it is important to have learned that the first exploration of the West was carried on by merchants.

The western Greek cities have received a full scale study from the late T. J. Dunbabin,¹⁰ whose death in 1955 at 43 was a serious loss. He treats the archaeological evidence for the foundations and the history of the colonies down to Persia's second invasion of Greece in 480. He includes a digression (pp. 435-71) on the dates of the colonies. One interesting point in this subject is that the western pottery has been classified according to the relative ages of the finds; but for the absolute dates we must still turn to the opening chapters of Thucydides' sixth book. Any detailed information given by Thucydides must be taken seriously, and no reasons appear for disregarding his dates (e.g., about 733 for Syracuse). But it should not be assumed that Thucydides inferred all his dates himself; on the contrary, the chapters (6.2-5) on colonization were probably drawn from Antiochus of Syracuse, a historian contemporary with Thucydides. This was admitted by Dunbabin, and the argument has been strengthened in an article by Professor K. J. Dover.¹¹ We are therefore using, in all probability, dates handed down by Antiochus of Syracuse when we speak of the chronology of the western colonies and their pottery. As Dunbabin says, "the chief authority of this system is derived from its acceptance by Thucydides [*sic*]. He, who elsewhere is sceptical about early Greek history, thought it reliable enough to present it in full detail."

⁹ "Prolegomena etc.," *Annual of the British School at Athens*, XXXIII, (1932/3), 170 ff.

¹⁰ *The Western Greeks* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1948).

¹¹ "La colonizzazione della Sicilia in Tucidide," *Maia*, new ser. VI (1953), 1-20.

Following colonization, the first major political movement in Greece was the appearance of the tyrants, especially in Peloponnesian cities. Historians use the Greek designation for these rulers, but the term tyrant does not have the ethically censorious tone that it has today. The Greek tyrant was an autocrat who held his power through skill and force, and to that degree he could be described unfavorably, but he was not a bloodthirsty ogre. The Athenian political philosophers, when Athens had long been free of tyrants, usually spoke of a *tyrannos* with disapproval and of a king, *basileus*, with respect (the Romans, on the contrary, regarded *rex* as a decidedly invidious title, and Augustus and his successors scrupulously avoided it). But there are few unambiguously horrendous acts that can be ascribed to the tyrants. Since Ure's *The Origin of Tyranny* (1922) there has been only one work in English on the tyrants, namely the recent book by A. Andrewes, the professor of Greek history at Oxford.¹² This is a judicious account, written with extreme clarity, of the tyrants from the seventh century onward; the uncluttered notes draw sharp attention to the ancient sources.

Sparta, however, managed to avoid tyranny by a rigid decision to reorganize her society. This reform led to the regime associated with the name of Lycurgus, the lawgiver who was allegedly appealed to by the Spartans for new laws. The Greeks believed that Lycurgus had established the Spartan military state in which the peers all ate together and devoted all their energies to defense. They were forced into this grim system by their conquests of the territory of the Messenians, west of Sparta. A colorful description of the Spartan discipline is given by Plutarch in his *Life of Lycurgus*.

As to Lycurgus himself, the tendency of historians has been to regard him as not really responsible for the social reform attributed to him. There is no definite evidence about him in classical times except his putative association with the Lycurgan system; Solon of Athens, on the other hand, could be recognized as a real personality from his writings, even if we did not know of his arbitration in 594. It has been suggested (Andrewes, p. 76) that the Spartans who reformed the constitution sought to lend authority to the system by representing it as the creation of Lycurgus, who

¹² *The Greek Tyrants* (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1956).

had acquired considerable dignity in Spartan legend. There probably was a real Lycurgus at one time, for Herodotus (1.65) mentions him as the guardian of a child king, Leobotes; elsewhere Herodotus (7.204) gives a genealogy that would date Leobotes and Lycurgus to the 900's B.C. This brings up the date of the reforms.

Most historians have lately dated the reform of the Spartan state to about 600 B.C. This is supported by several pieces of evidence. The narrative of Herodotus (1.65), except for his very early date for Lycurgus himself, seems to be describing a change that took place around 600, for Herodotus says that the reforms occurred shortly before the reigns of Kings Leon and Hegesicles (sixth century). The situation with Messenia, conquered by Sparta, became critical during the seventh century (c. 650), when a major revolt of the subjected people was suppressed with some difficulty; it would be plausible to assume that this warning caused the Spartans to brush aside all luxuries and to devote themselves to the strict military system; once again then the end of the seventh century seems likely as our date. "Lycurgus" also made changes in the organization of the army, which Andrewes (pp. 71-72) takes as evidence for dating the reforms in the seventh century, after the introduction of armored infantry around 700.

But the change in Spartan life did not take place overnight, and recently historians have lowered the date by which the regime was finally effective. Blakeway, cited by Andrewes, summarized the archaeological evidence pointing to the new conditions, and warned that archaeology could not show a sudden truncation of all creativeness and gaiety in Spartan life before 600. Indeed Laconian pottery is said not to have declined until well within the sixth century. As is usual in human affairs, the reforms that brought about the military Sparta known from our sources did not all come at once, but fell on both sides of the year 600.¹³

The Athenian state, about which our evidence is so much more copious than about any other, is constantly being studied by means of new inscriptions and new interpretations of Aristotle, Herodotus, Thucydides, and the other authors. The excavations of the Ameri-

¹³ The ninth century date for the reforms has been supported by N. G. L. Hammond, "The Lycurgean Reform at Sparta," *Journ. Hellen. Stud.*, LXX (1950), 42-64, and by W. den Boer, *Laconian Studies* (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1954).

can School at Athens in the Athenian Agora have produced many valuable new inscriptions which have been published above all in *Hesperia*, the journal of the school. It is probably in the restoration and interpretation of the stone inscriptions preserving public decrees and treaties that American scholars have made their largest single contribution to the study of Greek history. This material has not yet found its way into synthetic works on a large scale. A volume in preparation on the fascinating Athenian institution of ostracism will be able to incorporate the hundreds of ostraka cast against Athenian politicians in the fifth century. The great majority of these ostraka have not been published. A particularly interesting find was the hoard of 190 ostraka prepared with the name Themistocles.¹⁴

One full work on the Athenian constitution has appeared in recent years, by C. Hignett.¹⁵ It is too early to tell whether it will inaugurate further studies along its own lines, but since its position is in some ways unusual it must be noticed. Down to 1891 our information on the development of the Athenian constitution had to be recovered from the historians, especially Herodotus and Thucydides. But in that year F. G. Kenyon brought out his edition of the papyrus preserving almost all of Aristotle's *Constitution of the Athenians*. Aristotelian authorship of this work has been doubted but has never been disproved, and at the least it was probably supervised by Aristotle even if part or most of it was written by a pupil. The work is in two parts, chapters 1-41 being a historical survey of the Athenian constitution down to the time of the author, and 42-69 describing the constitution of Aristotle's time (the 320's B.C.). The latter part of the *Constitution* is therefore concerned with conditions that Aristotle knew personally. Rightly or wrongly, the latter part has been far less deeply studied than the first. Historians have been much concerned over Aristotle's survey, from about 600-403, of the laws of Athens, but it has been assumed that the purely descriptive chapters are reliable.

Within the first part of the *Constitution*, the main question has been whether Aristotle had sufficient documentary evidence to en-

¹⁴ O. Broneer, *Hesperia*, VII (1938), 228 ff.; there are only fourteen hands to be distinguished, showing that the ostraka were prepared by enemies of Themistocles for distribution before the vote.

¹⁵ *A History of the Athenian Constitution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952).

able him to give the full account of the changes in the constitution that he proposed to give. Aristotle does not quote many documents; indeed, he reproduces only a few words here and there from decrees. Unless Aristotle's failure to quote documents can be attributed to his having desired uniformity of literary style in his work, uninterrupted by direct quotations, it seems to follow that he did not have many documents, such as inscriptions, before him. This much has long been granted, and it has usually been admitted that Aristotle drew largely on the work of Athenian local historians of the fourth century (known as Attidographers), who sometimes quoted, sometimes paraphrased, their documents.

Did these Attidographers have solid evidence for their accounts, which in turn lie behind Aristotle? Hignett has concluded that they did not. He holds that historians writing in the fourth century did not have before them documents from the time of Cleisthenes (508) and even farther back. Their accounts were therefore based on tradition, conjecture, and tendentious party pamphlets from around 411–400 B.C. Hignett believes that the only trustworthy sources for the Athenian constitution are the historians of the fifth century. On these principles of scepticism (many older historians had held similar views) he is able to deny the reality of the Council of 400 which Aristotle includes among Solon's institutions and, as others have recently done, he dates the passing of the law on ostracism to 488 instead of allowing it to go back to 508 with the constitution of Cleisthenes, the real founder of Athenian democracy. Hignett's views about the sources of Aristotle and their quality have been challenged by some reviewers, and the matter is clearly destined for further study. The later parts of Hignett, giving a survey of Athenian politics from 462–401, are less controversial and are accompanied by learned appendixes.

Athens has also been the subject of what has been called "the most fertilizing contribution to the study of fifth-century Greek history since the First World War."¹⁶ This is the set of four volumes comprising *The Athenian Tribute Lists*, by Professors B. D. Meritt, H. T. Wade-Gery, and M. F. McGregor.¹⁷ The records of the tribute paid by the allies of the Delian League (later, though never offi-

¹⁶ R. Meiggs, *Classical Review*, new ser. II (1952), 100.

¹⁷ Vol. I (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939); Vols. II, III, IV (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies, 1949, 1950, 1953).

cially, the Athenian Empire), have long been recognized as a historical source of the first importance for our knowledge of the fifth century. The growth of the Athenian Empire, in the view of Thucydides, brought on the Peloponnesian War (1.23), and the financial records of the empire reveal an essential part of this growth. The tribute records had been edited in the various collections of inscriptions over the decades, but *ATL* is the first thorough interpretation of them. Many articles and two smaller monographs preceded the first volume of *ATL*, published in 1939. The texts of the inscriptions were republished in the slimmer Volume II, ten years later, since the authors felt that sufficient new material had been collected to call for a new edition of the lists; Volume II therefore contains the definitive texts. The third volume gives an admirable historical narrative of the Athenian Empire (Volume IV is the index). This narrative is very full, quotes the evidence liberally, and is yet easy reading.

The tribute lists do not radically change the conception of the Empire given by the historians, especially Thucydides. Indeed the interpretation of the inscriptions would be more than difficult without the contemporary historian. But the lists supplement the history of Thucydides in important ways. We can now trace the record, over decades, of the exact payments of tribute made by a member state to the leader state, Athens; and the immediacy of the faithfully inscribed amounts for each city brings to life Thucydides' judgment (1.99) that, by their payments of cash tribute, the states merely subsidized the Athenian navy, which could move tellingly against a state that tried to revolt. We can watch, too, the pedantic insistence of the Athenians on collecting the last penny. In 452, for example, the lists show what is apparently a record of late payments due in the previous year, and from the amounts it seems that the offending states had to pay a small fee for their delinquency. Again, among the most interesting supplementary documents printed in Volume II is the so-called Cleinias Decree, which makes provision for honest delivery of the tribute money to Athens. Translating:

The council and the officers in the cities and the inspectors shall take care that the tribute be collected each year and brought to Athens; there shall be contracts with the cities so that it shall be impossible for those who bring the tribute to

cheat. The city shall write down the amount of tribute on a tablet and shall send the tablet off to Athens sealed. The carriers shall surrender the tablet in Athens for the council to read when the tribute is brought in . . .

The publication of the lists, with the clear and ample commentary, makes material available for many studies in Athenian finance, and these are finding their place in the classical journals. The editors of *ATL* are joined in the discussions with Professor A. W. Gomme of Glasgow, who has taken issue with them on various points which must be passed over. Gomme is also the author of a great commentary on Thucydides which has now reached the third volume of a projected four.¹⁸ Wade-Gery has rightly called it "one of the landmarks of our generation of scholarship," and its superiority to previous commentaries, especially on the historical side, can scarcely be overstated. A commentary to an author in whom Greek history has its hard core must be technical and must work over each page in detail. It must also be selective, and Gomme did not propose to republish all that has been said in the works of his English and German predecessors. He also omits essays of a literary kind, but for his understanding of Thucydides' ethical position we may quote:

Thucydides was deeply moved when he wrote this analysis [3.82–83] of civil war in Greek cities . . . For the history of the Archidamian War cc. 1–83 of the third book are central: of this impressive section the greater part is not a tale of fighting, but of imperial politics and civil strife, told in speech and commentary; all of it concerned with morals, and in 82–83 Thucydides makes it clear where he stands. Yet some have thought that he stood, intellectually, with the outright imperialists and with those sophists among his contemporaries who denied the validity of any principle of morality but a short-sighted self-interest [2.385–86].

Among the three volumes now published, perhaps the most valuable single part is the Introduction to Volume I, in which Thucydides' assumptions, matters of chronology and economics and,

¹⁸ *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1945); II, III (1956).

above all, the sources for the Peloponnesian War outside Thucydides are reviewed.

Athens and Sparta, as the main antagonists of the fifth century, naturally attract most attention among the historians, but other states have also been investigated. Corinth, another great power in all periods of Greek history, has been excavated and the results are published in the series *Corinth*, also a product of the American School at Athens. Delphi, worked over by the French excavators, is a site of special interest because of the oracle. The standard work of H. W. Parke has been re-issued in an enlarged edition by him and Wormell.¹⁹

When we come to the fourth century and later, we pass from the era illuminated by the two major historians, Herodotus and Thucydides. Greek historical writing never again reached the heights of objectivity and literary power of the two fifth century leaders, but it remains deplorable that hundreds of later historians should have failed to be transmitted from antiquity. Some of these figures would be estimated more highly if they existed in their full form. The historian has, however, the assistance of Felix Jacoby, who has edited the remains of the lost Greek historians, as they are quoted by other writers, in his monumental *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker*. Fifteen volumes (the work is still in the third "part") have appeared, and several more volumes will be needed to bring it to a close: Professor H. Bloch will succeed Jacoby as editor. Over 600 historians have now been edited, with commentary mostly in German; there are no translations given. Jacoby has also published an English book, *Atthis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949), in which he shows that Athenian history was not preserved in a chronicle kept by religious officials, but had to be reconstructed through oral tradition by the first historians. Studies of several historians, based largely on Jacoby's indispensable material, have been made in America by Professors L. Pearson and T. S. Brown.²⁰ On the most important Hellenistic historian, Polybius, we now have the first

¹⁹ *The Delphic Oracle* (2 vols.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1956).

²⁰ L. Pearson, *The Early Ionian Historians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939); *The Local Historians of Attica* (Philadelphia: American Philological Association Monographs, XI, 1942); T. S. Brown, *Onesicritus* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1949); *Timaeus of Tauromenium* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1958).

volume of a learned commentary by Professor F. W. Walbank.²¹ A second volume will conclude the work (the first covers Books 1-6). It is surprising that the entire nineteenth century could produce not one commentary on the historian who links Greece and Rome, but Walbank has more than filled the gap. The commentary is more specifically historical than Gomme's comparable work on Thucydides, and anyone with a Loeb translation can use it with profit; the "Introduction" is especially judicious.

The greatest historical figure of this age was Alexander. English readers naturally turn to the full study by W. W. Tarn,²² and it has been Tarn's view of Alexander that has caused most discussion. In his Raleigh lecture to the British Academy²³ Tarn set forth his theory that "Alexander believed that he had a mission from the deity to harmonize men generally and be the reconciler of the world, mixing men's lives and customs as in a loving cup." Tarn's insistence that Alexander was working for the brotherhood of man has not generally appealed to the historians, and this characterization of Alexander does indeed seem too idealistic, but Tarn's book remains the most up to date source. In 1952 he brought out, with G. T. Griffith, a third edition of his standard work on the Hellenistic Age (the first chapter is an overcrowded historical outline).²⁴ On Demosthenes, the hearty opponent of the Macedonians, Professor Jaeger's book is the latest full study in English.²⁵

The largest historical work on the Hellenistic period in recent years has been the immense social and economic study by Rostovtzeff, the third volume of which contains the supporting notes to the narrative in the first two volumes.²⁶ One is unlikely to read it continuously but it is indispensable for reference. The leagues of the Hellenistic period, which were created as a political alternative to the Macedonian monarchy, have been studied in the Sather Lec-

²¹ *A Historical Commentary on Polybius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957).

²² *Alexander the Great* (2 vols.; Cambridge: University Press, 1948).

²³ "Alexander the Great and the Unity of Mankind," Raleigh Lecture, 1933 (also printed in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, XIX).

²⁴ *Hellenistic Civilisation* (London: Edward Arnold, 1952).

²⁵ W. Jaeger, *Demosthenes: The Origin and Growth of his Policy* (Cambridge: University Press, 1938).

²⁶ *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* (3 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941).

tures of Professor J. A. O. Larsen, who is also at work on a history of the leagues.²⁷

ROMAN HISTORY

In a recent article, A. N. Sherwin-White has discerned three trends in the study of Roman history since the epochal work of Mommsen in the last century.²⁸ In the first place, writers working under the inescapable influence of Mommsen introduced the language of western parliamentary democracies into Roman history and spoke rather freely of "parties" to which the statesmen belonged. In broad terms it is, or can be, significant to speak of given Romans as being liberal or conservative: the struggle between Scipio Africanus and Cato the Elder could be described in these terms, and the sharpest issue between them was perhaps their attitude toward Greek culture—Scipio being more internationalist, tolerant, and progressive, and Cato being narrow and even reactionary. Such terms, then, can be applied successfully to certain men. It should, however, be emphasized that political parties as we know them, with disciplined voting and commonly accepted economic programs, did not exist in Rome and would have been considered illegal as a gang. In theory at least each voter decided for himself.

The use of modern political terms to describe the ancients is therefore only good for psychological designations of the character of individual men. Although it makes sense to call Cato a conservative, it should not be assumed that he was the leader of more than a group of men who were tied to him by friendship and common views. Political allegiance depended on personal loyalty. This is now realized, and scholars speak less freely of parties.

Sherwin-White's next period in the study of Rome is that in which Roman politics, especially of the Republic, was conceived as influenced by the movements of a number of great generals and would-be dictators. It was natural, in reacting away from the party-theories, to think only of the ambitions of the leaders and to refuse to see any influence of party or friends. Pompey, Crassus, Caesar and the others were independent agents on this view, each merely seeking his own power.

²⁷ *Representative Government in Greek and Roman History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1955).

²⁸ "Violence in Roman Politics," *Journal of Roman Studies*, XLVI (1956), 1-9.

But even within the years during which this interpretation was being developed, a group of German scholars was creating the raw material for the third approach noticed by Sherwin-White. The progress of the German classical encyclopedia of Pauly-Wissowa had called for detailed articles on whatever Roman magistrates had left any biographical information in the sources. Among the learned authors of these articles were Münzer, Groag, and Stein. The last two also began a revised edition of the *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*, a biographical dictionary of the Roman Empire. Münzer, for his part, wrote a highly original book, in which the possibilities of the new techniques were exploited for more general historical purposes.²⁹

These scholars developed what has been called the "prosopographical" method—the precise study of friendships, marriages, and whatever other personal connexions could have influenced the politics of a given man. When Sherwin-White said of this method, "Roman history took on an eighteenth century air," he was perhaps alluding to the work of the school of Namier on English politics, in which methods similar to those of Münzer are used. In the writer's opinion, the prosopographical method has been and will continue to be the most productive new line in Roman history, and since the work of this school is far from exhausted, it is right to mention some of the leading examples.

Down to 1939 this kind of research had been almost entirely in German. But in that year the Clarendon Press at Oxford brought forth a stunning and revolutionary treatment of the end of the Roman Republic: the work of Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution*. To the praise already accorded this work it would be impertinent to add. The quality of this book may be indicated briefly by saying that it is the greatest work on Rome ever written in England (we may remember that Gibbon wrote partly in Switzerland). Its documentation is complete, its style heroic and virile, with tense ironies on every page ("But Antonius' talents were not those of a mere soldier," p. 104). The styles and convictions of Gibbon and Tacitus meet and are fused in Syme, who is not only the foremost living Roman historian writing English but ranks with Gibbon, Mommsen, and Rostovtzeff in the history of the subject.

²⁹ *Römische Adelsparteien und Adelsfamilien* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1920).

Syme's argument is that the principate of Augustus was no benign constitutional innovation but "was the work of fraud and bloodshed, based upon the seizure of power and redistribution of property by a revolutionary leader." And yet, for all the supreme power disposed by Augustus, the real work of the Roman historian must be to perceive the influence of his colleagues. "A democracy cannot rule an empire. Neither can one man, though empire may appear to presuppose monarchy. There is always an oligarchy somewhere, open or concealed." If so, the material assembled by the German prosopographical experts can be brought to bear on history, for "Roman history, Republican or Imperial, is the history of the governing class."

Accordingly, Syme analyzes fully the partisans around Julius Caesar, Antony, and the republican opposition to Octavian (there was never a Ciceronian faction). These are no parties, but rather bodies of conspirators, varying in courage and foresight. The analysis of the factions reaches its height as Syme reconstructs the events of 23 B.C.—the illness of Augustus and his definitive resignation of the consulship³⁰—and suggests that it was the faction around Augustus, led by the iron Agrippa, that insisted on the new arrangement.

The study of family history in Syme's book, and in his many subsequent articles, showed what could be done with the prosopographical method. But the lesson of *The Roman Revolution* was more than a demonstration of a technique (which was not in fact new). Far deeper went Syme's evaluation. Too often the historian withholds from the dead the moral standards that he would apply to the living. This is a perversion of what history should be. The careful, objective ascertaining of the facts does not preclude bringing morals to bear on them. A despotism is no better for having been an ancient one. Syme therefore takes a deliberately critical view of Augustus and refuses to approve absolutism merely on account of the skill with which it was managed.

Syme was, no doubt, influenced by events of the 1930's in Europe in his interpretation of the Empire and its founder; he also felt that "It is surely time for some reaction from the 'traditional' and conventional view of the period. Much that has recently been written

³⁰ Except on two formal occasions later.

about Augustus is simply panegyric, whether ingenuous or edifying." To the English public Syme's view was somewhat novel, but it was in a sense a movement back to the view of Syme's master, Gibbon, who declared that "The tender respect of Augustus for a free constitution which he had destroyed can only be explained by an attentive consideration of the character of that subtle tyrant. A cool head, an unfeeling heart, and a cowardly disposition, prompted him at the age of nineteen to assume the mask of hypocrisy, which he never afterwards laid aside." The fully documented repetition of this opinion was a novelty in England, but in Germany there had always been Mommsen, followed for example by Hermann Dessau.³¹ Dessau's estimate of Augustus' position is less open than Syme's, but speaking of the restoration of the republic in 27, he said: "No one supposed that, with the reintroduction of the lot for a part of the governorships, there was or was intended to be any division of power between the ruler and the Senate . . . A dyarchy never existed and was never supposed to exist." For the sham restoration, "He wanted to be thanked, and this was granted him after a few days."

Syme's harsh view of Augustus is the presentation of a case, and it would be possible to hold more favorable opinions. For this generation his portrayal of Augustus has been the most influential one. It is not salutary for controversy to cease forever, but since 1939 there has been no work answering Syme and rehabilitating Augustus from the charge of revolutionary tyranny. Whatever the ultimate opinions turn out to be on that subject, Syme's work stands as the pre-eminent example in English of what can be done to write history using the methods of Münzer.

There have been several other works in recent years along the same lines. The most ambitious and admirable has been Professor T. R. S. Broughton's *Magistrates*.³² This two-volume work is a collection of the known officers of the Republic for every year. The first volume covers 509–100 B.C.; the second, reflecting the greater availability of names in the later period, covers 99–31 (the editor took the Battle of Actium as the end of the Republic). The industry

³¹ *Geschichte der Römischen Kaiserzeit* (Vol. I; Berlin: Weidmann, 1924).

³² *Magistrates of the Roman Republic* (2 vols.; Lancaster: Amer. Phil. Ass. Monographs, XV, 1951, 1952); Marcia L. Patterson collaborated on Vol. I.

and accuracy of this work have been signaled in the reviews, and it complements the *Prosopographia* as the source for the political history of the Republic. The editor also found room for brief commentary on a good many magistrates, and the references to ancient sources are excellent guidance for interpreting the lists.

A pupil of Professor Broughton and of Professor Lily Ross Taylor at Bryn Mawr, Martha W. Hoffman Lewis, has collected all known priests in the Roman priestly colleges under the early Empire.³³ Broughton had already made lists available for the Republican period, and Dr. Lewis' work is therefore partly a continuation of the *Magistrates*. But she has also tried to draw historical conclusions from her study. She concludes, for example, that "The pre-eminence of the pontificate and the augurate is confirmed by the fact that it is to these priesthoods that members of the imperial family were elected" (p. 107). She also studies the ratio of patricians to plebeians in the priestly colleges and concludes that the patricians in the priesthoods declined throughout her period until the nearly complete annihilation of the patrician priests under Nero. This pattern is what would be expected by anyone familiar with the decline of leading families under the Empire, and Dr. Lewis has documented the movement.

Another book, but one for the specialist only, analyzing a number of offices and their holders is Jaako Suolahti's *Junior Officers*.³⁴ This work, happily written in good English by a Finn, assembles all known *tribuni militum*, *II-viri navales*, and prefects, 509 B.C.—14 A.D. This book, like Lewis' *Priests*, is intended as a contribution to social history. It is, in fact, doubtful whether the names may be relied on from the earliest period, but certainly from about 200 B.C. we may assume that the lists can be trusted to give us the right names. Suolahti's results are of this kind:

In the last Republican century the proportional share of the *gentes* of the nobility, above all the patricians, was decreasing, whereas the number of lower senatorial and equestrian *gentes* [in the officer lists] was increasing. Especially the members of

³³ *The Official Priests of Rome under the Julio-Claudians* [44 B.C.—68 A.D.] (Rome: American Academy, 1955).

³⁴ *The Junior Officers of the Roman Army in the Republican Period* (Helsinki: Annales Acad. Scientiarum Fennicae, 1955).

the ruling *gentes* avoid these [junior military] offices, whereas those belonging to declining ones, or to side branches, continue to serve in them . . . The patricians had already lost their military traditions, and turned into a mere official aristocracy with land property [297–98].

The overall political soundness of this result cannot be doubted, although it must be pointed out that the reasons for progressively smaller numbers of patricians in the junior military offices are more complex than a mere loss of military ardor in the patrician class. In any case Suolahti has done good service in collecting the names of the officers and his lists will probably be used by others with gratitude.

Finally, two works by English scholars who use the methods of family history: J. Crook has issued a most valuable work³⁵ on the mechanism of government in the Empire, analyzing the various circles of friends who surrounded and advised the emperors from Augustus through the third century A.D. These advisers were called merely *amici*, and Crook is careful to point out that the term *consilium principis*, although used freely by modern writers, was never used by the ancients. "Here can be seen the most striking difference between the *consistorium* of the late Empire and what went before, for in the *consistorium* we have precisely, at last, an institution with a fixed designation." But even though the term was not used, and is avoided in Crook's text, it is possible and necessary to recognize an informal group that played a large part in the decisions taken nominally by the emperors. Crook's last chapter, "The Influence of Imperial Councils," assesses the weight of the advice given by the *amici* in this or that policy. The book also contains an elaborate and very useful Prosopographical Index of some 360 *amici*, with brief notes on their careers ("L. Verginius Rufus. *Amicus* of Nerva . . . He crushed the rebellion of Vindex in 68, and twice refused to take arms for the purple, doubtless because more and safer influence could be wielded behind the scenes. Tutor and friend of Pliny."). Some supplements to the list were given in an article by Syme.³⁶

The analysis of Roman politics through family groups is the basis

³⁵ *Consilium Principis* (Cambridge: University Press, 1955).

³⁶ *American Journal of Philology*, LXXVII (1956), 264–73.

of the major work of H. H. Scullard.³⁷ Scullard, who naturally acknowledges his debt to Münzer, has the enviable subject of the great age of the Scipionic family and its rivalry with the conservative Cato and others, and the treatment of these colorful figures makes the central chapters of his book even more interesting than his clarity and thoroughness would otherwise be. His sharply incised sketch of Cato (pp. 110 ff.) is well worth reading for itself. The lists of consuls, praetors, and censors reinforce the doctrine of the narrative: if one merely reads, for example, the names of the consuls from 205–190, he will find in those sixteen years some member of the Cornelian *gens* as consul nine times. Taken with the fact that the Fabian *gens* obviously held power in the nervous years after the battle of Cannae (216), the surge of the Cornelii can be seen in its full meaning (note that the Fabii do not place another consul till 183), and Scullard does not neglect the opportunity to extract the maximum of political history from this well-documented period.

This series of studies in the tradition of Münzer has been accompanied by numerous articles which we must pass over; but enough has been said to indicate the usefulness of this kind of inquiry into Roman history, and it is certain that the method will be used in other periods and on other subjects. There is a danger in trying to squeeze family history and the history of political friendships out of periods that are not rich enough in personal information, and no one claims that these methods answer every question. For help on economic problems one would scarcely turn to the family historians and expect them to be as useful as the contributions of Rostovtzeff or Tenney Frank.³⁸

A more traditional kind of inquiry has concerned the Roman historians. Syme will soon bring out a two-volume study of Tacitus, the potential importance of which hardly needs to be stressed^{38a}; and on Tacitus we have also had the books and articles of Professor

³⁷ *Roman Politics, 220–150 B.C.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951).

³⁸ M. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (2nd ed., 2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957); Tenney Frank (ed.), *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome* (5 vols.; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1933–40); *An Economic History of Rome* (2nd ed.; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1927).

^{38a} *Tacitus* (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958) has now appeared.

R. S. Rogers of Duke, especially on Tiberius.³⁹ Professor M. L. W. Laistner's Sather Lectures concentrate on Sallust, Livy, Tacitus, and Ammianus.⁴⁰ And considerable attention has been given lately to the earliest Roman historians who lay behind Livy, and therefore to Livy himself.

Within this early field of Roman history argument and counter-argument run on without pause, and it might seem dangerous to detect a trend in opinion. Nevertheless, it seems safe to say that fewer scholars are attempting to hold to the credibility of the earliest legends about Rome, such as are found in the first books of Livy. Some decades ago, scholars who considered Livy's narrative adequately founded on true tradition might have been called conservative, but today it might well be thought radical to try to return, for example, to the view that the story of Coriolanus in Book 2 contains more than the vaguest kind of information. On this legend the *Cambridge Ancient History* declares: "The story of Coriolanus is one whose outstanding merits do not include any notable contribution to our knowledge of the Volscian Wars."⁴¹

It must, however, be emphasized that individual scholars are likely to pick out this or that element in the traditions and regard it as credible. Logically, this procedure might ultimately rescue all the early tradition and we might find ourselves back with the old conservative view; but this seems unlikely to happen. Reactions and disagreements are inevitable, but the trend of criticism could be indicated by the words of the senior historian Plinio Fraccaro: "I would therefore say that the most difficult virtue required by the historian of early Rome is that of being able to renounce the greater part of the information the ancients have handed down to us; next comes that of knowing how to interpret and to illuminate the rest." Within such a generally sceptical attitude some freedom may be exercised: "We have no means of proving (at least it has not so far been proved) that [the] kings were not real human

³⁹ *Criminal Trials and Criminal Legislation under Tiberius* (Middletown: Amer. Phil. Ass. Monographs, VI, 1935); *Studies in the Reign of Tiberius* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1943).

⁴⁰ *The Greater Roman Historians* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1947).

⁴¹ The words of H. M. Last.

kings... We should, therefore, allow these kings to keep their place in the history which we recount."⁴²

Now it might seem that scholars decide casually or capriciously whether they will accept the early Roman traditions. Subjective convictions do play their part in such decisions, but there has also been generally accepted research into the literary character of the earliest Roman historical writing. In fact, without sensible literary canons one cannot proceed a step in early Roman history, since we have no documents, such as inscriptions, against which we could check the reports of our source Livy. But by sharpening our notions of the earliest historical writing we can draw inferences as to what may have been available to Livy and his predecessors and as to how they treated their material.

The earliest Roman historian was Q. Fabius Pictor. He wrote not in Latin but in Greek; this fact at once gives the clue to his probable traditions. The language of history had always been Greek from Herodotus onward, and Fabius, writing about 200 B.C., would have found it hard and unnatural to break away from the traditions of Greek historiography. M. Gelzer, who contributed two studies of Fabius and his traditions, has recently⁴³ reaffirmed his opinion that "the researches [of Fabius] took as their model the contemporary Greek historiography." But since Fabius gave, or tried to give, Roman history from the founding of the city, a serious question arises as to how much he could have known, about 200 B.C., of the preceding five centuries. If it could be decided that he knew nothing whatever of the times before, say, 400 B.C., then Livy's account could be disregarded; for Livy goes back ultimately to Fabius through several intermediate sources. On the other hand, the credit of Fabius could be raised if documentary sources could be postulated behind him.

The documentary source most often suggested for Fabius has been the so-called *Annales Maximi*, or annals kept by the Pontifex Maximus of Roman religion. According to one passage of Cicero (*De Orat.* 2.52), the Pontifex recorded the events of each year and had done so since the founding of Rome; he published these on a

⁴² Taken from *Journal of Roman Studies*, XLVII (1957), 65, 64.

⁴³ *Hermes*, LXXXII (1954), 343; earlier studies, *ibid.*, LXVIII (1933) 129 ff., LXIX (1934), 46 ff.

tablet in front of his house for all to see. But many scholars would prefer to see the character of these annals in the words of the elder Cato: "I do not wish to write what appears on the tablet of the Pontifex Maximus—how often corn was expensive, or how often there was an eclipse of the moon or sun." And, as Fraccaro points out, the longest quotation we possess of the *Annales* concerns the expiation of a religious prodigy: very little secular history can be recovered today from the *Annales*. This may indeed be accidental, but when we look again at Cato's words it is hard to believe that the *Annales* could have been a rich source for the history of early Rome.

It has, moreover, been calculated that the *Annales* were scarcely kept before the fourth century B.C.; and it would take considerable faith to believe implicitly in the statement of Cicero quoted above. If we combine these discouraging facts about the *Annales* with the findings of those who place Fabius in the Hellenistic tradition, the upshot is that he will have found or preserved little firm documentary tradition about early Rome.

What then of Livy? *A fortiori*, he lacked, through his intermediate sources, documentary reports about early Rome before the third century B.C. When Fabius came down to his own time in his history, his knowledge was of course adequate, but before his own time he had to rely on whatever oral tradition he could find. When finally the material, whatever it was, descended to Livy, did he transcribe it faithfully? The high rhetorical polish of Livy's earliest books certainly did not come from so slender a source as Fabius, and Livy himself was sufficiently persuaded of his literary duty to the public—he would not leave his sources unadorned with suitably elaborate narrative. A recent study by A. H. McDonald⁴⁴ considers certain sections of Livy to show his rhetorical language and "how he applied the accepted methods of historical composition, in the light of the canons defined by Cicero." It is shown that Livy's style and diction are expanded and contracted according to the impressiveness of the scene he is describing. The attempt to place Livy within the traditions of Latin writing is no less important than probing his sources, and it is to be hoped that this line will be further pursued.

⁴⁴ *Journ. Rom. Stud.*, XLVII (1957), 155 ff.

The great political figures of the late Republic—Marius, Sulla, Pompey, Caesar, Cicero—have not received many full new studies in recent years, and there is some danger that our conceptions of their personalities may become fixed. Caesar has been the subject of a long biography by G. Walter,⁴⁵ but for the others we must still turn to the *Cambridge Ancient History* or to occasional chapters such as Syme's masterful pages on Cicero (Chapter 10 of his book cited above). Lily Ross Taylor's Sather Lectures on the politics of the Caesarian period are good reading.⁴⁶

The politics of Rome can also be studied through the coinage, especially of the emperors, and, although coins are not a new subject, recent years have seen many studies of coinage in English, by (for example) Mattingly, Sydenham, Grant, Sutherland, and Kraay. An introduction to numismatics as material for history is the recent book of Professor Grant, which contains references to the work of others and is well illustrated.⁴⁷ Mattingly has recently published a more general study of imperial Rome which covers the same ground as Tarn's work on Hellenistic civilization, and in this book coins naturally play a large role.⁴⁸

The study of Roman civilization has not been confined to Italy itself. A striking achievement of the Empire was spreading Roman ways to the outer world so that Herodian, a Syrian, could wish to write a history in Greek of the third century emperors. Archaeology has had a rich harvest in the excavations at Dura, investigated for years and illustrated in many volumes by the Yale archaeologists under the inspiration of Rostovtzeff; the latter published a book on Dura that was another example of his wide-ranging command of several disciplines.⁴⁹ Another fascinating work on the outer Roman world is the book of Sir Mortimer Wheeler, now reprinted as a paperback.⁵⁰ Archaeology as contributing to economic history will be treated in an extensive three-volume work announced by F. Heichelheim.⁵¹

⁴⁵ *Caesar: A Biography*, tr. E. Craufurd (New York: Scribner's, 1952).

⁴⁶ *Party Politics in the Age of Caesar* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1949).

⁴⁷ M. Grant, *Roman History from Coins* (Cambridge: University Press, 1958).

⁴⁸ H. Mattingly, *Roman Imperial Civilisation* (New York: St Martin's, 1957).

⁴⁹ *Dura-Europus and its Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938).

⁵⁰ *Rome Beyond the Imperial Frontiers* (London: Bell, 1954).

⁵¹ *An Economic History of the Ancient World* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1958-).

We have mentioned some problems of Livian historiography; we may conclude with a problem at the other end of Roman historiography, from the fourth century A.D., when the Roman Empire shades into the Byzantine period. The death of Constantine (337) frequently closes histories of the Empire, and he has great interest for us because of his conversion to Christianity. A much debated question concerning Constantine is whether the *Life* of him, ascribed to Eusebius of Caesarea, is in fact by Eusebius. This debate has not been settled, but an interesting find has come to light. A papyrus, now in London, contains what appears to be a contemporary copy of a letter of Constantine that is quoted by Eusebius.⁵² If so, the author of the *Life* of Constantine used authentic documents, here at least, and this may raise the credit of the *Life* generally.

The Eusebius-papyrus reminds us that problems of historiography are always with us, and it suggests a final remark. It is necessary, for the further progress of ancient history (and of all studies in antiquity) that we keep the intentions of the author clearly in mind. The historians of antiquity did not write as professional historians do today, trying to meet high standards of research and awaiting the criticism of learned colleagues. Syme has said, "Rome was very different. History took its origin from political life, and from the political class. It was first written by senators, and it continued for a long time to be the jealous preserve of the governing class."⁵³ And in both Greece and Rome, history had or soon acquired its rhetorical aim: to persuade the reader to accept the historian's judgment of the actors, or to provide an ethical example from the past. Even the great Thucydides reconstructed early Greek history, in his opening pages, with the aim of making it as jejune and unglamorous as possible—to magnify his war, and therefore himself, to the public.

It follows that we can no longer accept the reports of the ancient historians without considering their motives and prejudices. Only the duller historians lack such inspirations. As teachers, we have the further duty to get the historians into the hands of the students. The literary excellence of our sources should be the envy of his-

⁵² A. H. M. Jones, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, V (1954), 196-200.

⁵³ *Greece and Rome*, 2nd ser. IV (1957), 160.

torians in other fields and any mature student will want to collect them for his library. It is in the reading of the text that we communicate with the author and *contemplate the object*. That is the only true method in humane studies. "Everything is what it is, and not another thing."

ADDENDUM

Attention may be called to the following paperbacks:

Jacob Burckhardt, *The Age of Constantine the Great*

Tenney Frank, *Life and Literature in the Roman Republic*

I. A. Richmond, *Roman Britain*

O. Seyffert, *Dictionary of Classical Antiquities*

W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great* (text vol. only)